



Department of Philosophy

PHIL*4500 “Philosophy Honours Seminar” Winter 2011

Mon., Weds. 10:00–11:20, MacKinnon (MACK) 312

COURSE OUTLINE

Please read this outline carefully and retain it for future reference.

Instructor: Andrew Bailey
Office: MacKinnon 347 (behind the Philosophy front office)
Phone extension: 56389
E-mail: abailey@uoguelph.ca
Website: [Courselink](#) and <http://phil4500.pbworks.com>
Office hours: Monday 2:30–3:30, or by appointment.

Course prerequisites: 1.00 credits in Philosophy at the 3000 level; 75% average in all Philosophy course attempts; registration restricted to Philosophy majors. This is a 1.00 credit course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This research seminar provides philosophy majors with an opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in their previous studies to an in-depth research paper. This course permits deep engagement through time for high-level critical reflection. The course will be modeled on a graduate seminar; students will be given explicit guidance as to what is required for a course of this sort, and will have the opportunity to hone the skills required to do graduate-level philosophical research.

Over the first half of the semester we will work together on a philosophical topic of broad application. We will determine this topic together at our first class meeting—examples might include the problem of free will, or the realism/anti-realism debate, or the problem of justification—and, under the instructor’s guidance, we will go from scratch to a reasonable grasp of the key issues and positions, using the contemporary philosophical literature. This will involve developing skills in literature search, synthesis, analysis of the key issues in a debate, and focus. A key feature of the course is that we will work as a group to build this understanding, under the guidance of but not ‘taught’ by the instructor.

During the second half of the semester students will write an article-length paper on a topic that builds upon the material from the first half of the class. For example, if we discussed free will in the first few weeks, students might choose to write a paper on the problem of mental causation, or physical determinism, or moral psychology, or the problem of evil.... A new and complementary set of skills will be exercised in these weeks: ‘drilling down’ into a particular literature, developing a thesis, connecting it to a debate, understanding what is involved in laying out and defending that thesis, and presenting a case clearly and effectively.

EVALUATION:

Students will make two presentations, contribute to the creation of a wiki, and plan and prepare a final paper.

- a) The first presentation will be during the first half of the semester, and will be on some aspect of the topic that we have adopted for the basis of the class. It will be worth 15%.
- b) The wiki will be a synthesis of the material we have gathered on the class topic. Your contribution to this wiki will be worth 20% of your grade for this class. This grade will be assigned on March 9.
- c) The second presentation will be during the second half of the semester, and will be on your own philosophical research (building on the material from the first half of the class). It will be worth 20%.
- d) A plan and bibliography for your term paper will be due by March 21. It will be worth 10% of the grade.
- e) Your final paper will be due by 4:30 pm on Monday, April 11. It will be worth the remaining 35% of your grade. This paper should be approximately 20 double-spaced pages in length (no fewer than 14 and no more than 30). Papers can be submitted by email.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION:

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

WHEN YOU CANNOT MEET A COURSE REQUIREMENT...

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, ID number, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>).

LATE PENALTIES:

Unless other arrangements are made, in writing, with the course instructor, late assignments will be penalized by 5% for the first day they are late and then 2% for every subsequent day. (For example, a grade that otherwise would have been 77% will be 68% for an essay that is three days late.)

DROP DATE:

The last date to drop one-semester Winter 2011 courses, without academic penalty, is Friday March 11. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>).

COPIES OF OUT-OF-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>).

RECORDING OF MATERIALS:

Presentations in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

STUDENTS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT:

Resources are available to you if you require additional support in the course (e.g. if you have a learning disability or are dealing with other issues that are impacting on your ability to meet the course requirements). I encourage you to come and discuss this me, and to contact the appropriate university resource. The Centre for Students with Disabilities (which includes learning disabilities) is on Level 3 of the University Centre (www.counselling.uoguelph.ca/csd/), as is Counselling Services (www.counselling.uoguelph.ca/counselling/).

RESOURCES:

- a. The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations that apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>.
- b. The best resource for general academic counselling (e.g. about degree requirements, or for approval to add/drop a course) is your program counsellor: these are listed at http://www.uoguelph.ca/uaic/program_counsellors.shtml. The Philosophy Department's faculty advisor for undergraduates is Prof. Karen Wendling, extension 53229, wendling@uoguelph.ca.

PROVISIONAL CLASS SCHEDULE, PHIL*4500, WINTER 2011

	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY
1	Jan 10 th : Choosing a topic	Jan. 12 th : Creating an overview
2	Jan. 17 th : Primary sources	Jan. 19 th : Primary sources
3	Jan. 24 th : Presentation 1	Jan. 26 th : Presentation 2
4	Jan. 31 st : Presentation 3	Feb. 2 nd : Presentation 4
5	Feb. 7 th : Presentation 5	Feb. 9 th : Presentation 6
6	Feb. 14 th : Synthesising	Feb. 16 th : Synthesising
	Feb. 21 st : Winter Break	Feb. 23 rd : Winter Break
7	Feb. 28 th : Finding a problem	Mar. 2 nd : Focussing a problem
8	Mar. 7 th : Developing an argument	Mar. 9 th : Developing an argument Last chance for wiki contributions
9	Mar. 14 th : Presentation 1	Mar. 16 th : Presentation 2
10	Mar. 21 st : Presentation 3 PLAN AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE	Mar. 23 rd : Presentation 4
11	Mar. 28 th : Presentation 5	Mar. 30 th : Presentation 6
12	Apr. 4 th : Philosophical discussion	Apr. 6 th : Last class
	Apr. 11: FINAL ESSAY DUE	